



**register**  
**SPRING 1975**

*Compliments of  
Raytheon Company  
Lexington, Mass.*



Lino Tontodonato

## still here

1/75

*i used to think of myself as  
a parallel, living on one side  
and slowly dying on the other.  
sanctuation was made possible  
only by those who chose to believe  
in something rather than  
nothing, and some one rather than  
no one. i am a scapegoat,  
but it's keeping me alive.*

mkg

*walking with you  
i with the bad leg  
you with the limp  
down Magic St.  
and you are the witch  
but i am the powers  
attracting the hawker rhymers  
"three nickels and a dime  
if you got the time  
if you're short on sight  
buy it that's right  
read it tonight  
make me feel alright"  
walking with you  
an almost poem  
folded in my back pocket—  
—surviving that,  
but smoothed out you shatter away  
walking with you  
alone  
down Magic St.  
you're distant enough  
so i can't recall*

*your phone number at will  
on Magic St.  
where i connect  
solar energy  
but you hold the cards  
(and wouldn't let me possess you  
even if i wanted to)  
but i'm always alone  
when that phone booth rings  
and i laugh with a wrong number  
cause if i were with you  
you'd shatter away  
and pull all the king's horses  
from your pack of L&M Longs.  
never you  
only me  
on Magic St.  
where i needed you  
loved you  
found you  
lost you  
but never,  
according to you.*

Steve Messina (4/17/74)

# BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL REGISTER

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## NONSENSE

"WHO ARE YOU?"

"Who? Me, sir?"

"Yes, you."

"Smith, sir."

"Why are you sitting there?"

"I'm in this class."

"Why haven't I noticed you before?"

"I don't know, sir. I've been sitting here for two months."

"Then why don't I have your name in my book?"

"Perhaps you didn't put it there."

"That's no excuse."

"I didn't say it was, sir."

"You implied it."

"I did not!"

"Are you being flip?"

"No, sir."

"Why don't I have any of your marks in my book?"

"Perhaps for the same reason that you don't have my name there."

"You are being flip."

"No, sir."

"Don't argue with me. You've fouled up my entire system, and now you're arguing with me. You have no right to exist. I've only noticed you for two minutes, and already you're a problem."

"I'm sorry, sir."

"That doesn't help any. Don't let it happen again!"

"I won't. Do you have my mark yet?"

"I'm working on it. I ought to flunk you, though, just for existing. . . . You got a 'B'. What? That is one of the highest marks that I gave. How dare you get a grade like that when you aren't loud or noticeable! What sort of a sneaking, decadent, amoral pervert are you? How is society supposed to keep track of intelligent people if they aren't noticeable? It would be all right to be quiet if you were stupid, but if you're intelligent, then you have to come up with something. Either become more noticeable, or get lower grades, or I'll flunk you."

"What are you doing?"

"I'm running in the middle of a street."

"Why?"

"To be noticeable."

"You'll get run over."

"Then I'll be noticeable. They'll have to drive around me."

"No, someone tried it yesterday, but they went right over him. Squish, squish."

"Maybe I had better get back on the sidewalk."

Bang! Squish, squish.

"Get a picture of that! Get a picture!"

Click, click.

Finding himself absolute elsewhere:

"I guess I didn't make it to the sidewalk. It's kind of boring here, just sitting here."

"I wish I were God."

"Hello. I'm Abraham Mills, chairman of the Rules Committee. You shouldn't have any problems as long as you go by the Rules carved in the vaulted welkin. If a problem does come up, tell me and I'll tell you how to solve it. Your coronation is set for four-thirty, which gives you about four hours and twenty minutes. Do you have any questions?"

"What, huh, who? Where am I, and what's going on here?"

"I can't tell you that. Everything you need to know is up there."

"Then why did you ask me if I had any questions if you won't answer them?"

"It was a rhetorical question. As I said before, everything you have to know is carved in the vaulted welkin."

"How am I supposed to know what they mean until I know what's going on here?"

"That's not my problem! God ought to be able to figure those things out for himself."

"Did you say that I'm God?"

"No, I implied it."

"Well, am I?"

"According to the Rules, you're God."

"That's nice. Can anybody become God?"

"As long as they go by the Rules and there is no God at the time. If someone is already God or wants to become God at the same time, then there are different Rules to go by."



"What Rules?"

"The Rules to become God with or without a confrontation."

"I don't see those Rules on the ceiling."

"Of course not, those Rules are in the Rules Book."

"May I have a copy?"

"No."

"Why?"

"Because the Rules say so."

"Why?"

"Because the Rules say that only members of the Rules Committee may see the Rules Book, or people who want to become God with or without a confrontation, or people in their third year of religious education, or anyone else, or God when he is faced with a problem, but never may God see the Rules when he is not faced with a problem and not/nor confrontation."

"Why?"

"Because it's unnecessary for God to see the Rules Book unless he needs to consult it for the answer to a problem or the Rules to a confrontation."

"Why does it have to be necessary?"

"Because if it were not necessary then time would be wasted."

"So what if time were wasted?"

"If time were to be wasted, then there would be less of it. There are only three hours just now, and we have to play those three hours over and over again. The way time is abused nowadays, the three hours rest that each moment gets is just barely enough time to replenish itself. If there were less than three hours, then we would have to play what was

left more often, and it would become worn out, and break down. Then everything would stop and we'd have to send away for more time, but in addition to being extremely expensive, it would take an eternity in getting here."

"Why don't you order more time now?"

"The Rules say that you cannot order new time until there is less than three hours of old time left."

"That doesn't make any sense."

"Well, when the Rules were made, time used to last a lot longer because it didn't have to take so much abuse, and the Rules aren't here to make sense, they're here to tell you what to do."

"Why can other people look at the Rules when it's unnecessary?"

"It is not unnecessary. For something to be unnecessary, it must waste time. To waste time, you must have control over it, and only God has control over time, so only God can waste time, so only things that God does can be unnecessary. It says so right in the Rules."

"Why don't you change the Rules?"

"Because the Rules say that you can't change the Rules."

"Why?"

"Because that's the way they were written."

---

Feeling a bit awkward talking to the chairman, he nervously twisted one of the rings that had appeared on his fingers.

"What are you in for?"

"What?"



"Why'd you get sent here? Did you get someone on the committee upset?"

"Nobody sent me here. I'm God."

"Sure you are."

"I am."

"If you're God, come over here."

"I can't."

"Then you're not God."

"Hey, what's going on here?"

"You're in a prison circle."

"You're new here, that's obvious."

"Do you know what obvious is? It's something that people say they know and understand when they really don't, and they only say it to make other people feel stupid, but then the other people say that they understand it too. Then after everybody is through saying that they understand it, there will be someone that says that he doesn't see, and everybody will laugh and call him an idiot, but he will still ask the question, and get everybody upset, so they get rid of him. Being a jailer, I have lots of spare time so I am also an amateur philosopher, or isn't that obvious?"

"What's a prison circle?"

"No need to rush me, I was getting to that. Well, if somebody displeases God or one of the Committee members, God gets rid of him by sending him to one of the prison systems. This is the circle system, which, if I may say so, has the lowest escape rate of any system. You're in a model 36 retaining circle which goes round and round in circles with ever decreasing radii. After a few thousand years, you reach the center, and then you spin about for the rest of eternity, or until a pardon. Only once has a person escaped from one of these; his circle got caught around his neck and eventually all the way through, and he drifted off in two different directions, with his body trying to find his head."

"How does God send someone here?"

"How should I know? I'm just here to keep the prisoners company, not to tell them how they got here or what they're doing here."

Not wanting to spend the rest of eternity getting dizzy, and suspecting that his touching the rings put him here, he tried to turn them back to where they were.

"Where am I now?"

"You are in the Box."

"The Box?"

"The Box." And indeed he was in a large box. He backed into a corner, but was now in a smaller box, which made him jump back into even a smaller box, until he was crouched in the very corner, and could hardly breathe, so again he touched his rings.

"Faster! Faster! Run faster or you'll fall behind!"

"Did I go through a mirror or something?"

"What are you doing here? I left you in a 36. This is society's trap, the rat race, but you're a political prisoner, so get off. Run faster! Faster!"

"Why do I have to run faster?"

"You aren't supposed to be here anyway, but if you don't run faster, you'll fall behind and be disgraced in society; you'll never get a high paying job, good looking wife, an expensive house with two cars in the garage, three color televisions, and four luxury bathrooms."

"What if I don't want to get them?"

"You have to want them; the Rules say so."

"You have Rules here, too?"

"The Rules are everywhere. You can't escape them."

"I can't run anymore."

"Faster, run faster! Remember the bathrooms!"

"They don't inspire me. When is this race over?"

"This race is never over, and it always goes faster."

At this, the jailer, who now sounded like a carnival barker, spun the rat race even faster, which sent our hero flying off at a tangent, much to the indifference of the jailer; he twisted one of his rings as he landed.

"Where am I?"

"I'm sorry, but you can't ask that. This isn't a place."

"Of course this is a place. How could I be here if it wasn't?"

"This is existence and non-existence."

"I haven't understood much since I got here, but you are more confusing than the rest."

"I'm not confusing. I'm Fate."

"I thought there were three of you."

"There were, but with modern technology and all, the other two have been replaced by machines."

"Why didn't they replace you, too?"  
"You need someone to run the machines; even if there is a machine to run all the machines, you need someone to run those. So what it all boils down to is me."

"Why were you chosen, and not one of the other two?"

"Well, we lined up three strings and cut two, snip, snip, and when the cutting was done, I existed and they didn't."

"I thought that to get here you have to be dead, so how can I be dead and still exist?"

"Well, aside from all the religious and metaphysical garbage, your string is probably just bruised."

"Can I find out how I would have turned out if I had lived?"

"I'm sorry, but I can't give out that information."

"But I'm God."

"Especially to you."

"Why not?"

"I'm not supposed to tell you that, but I've always had a certain affinity towards Gods, and since a Rule isn't broken unless they catch you, if you'll turn on the water, I'll tell you."

"Why do I have to turn on the water?"

"So they won't hear us."

"Who are they?"

"The Rules Committee."

"There's no faucet."

"You're God, make one."

"I haven't had much practice, so I'm not very good at this."

"You'll never get anywhere unless you try."

"All right. . . . Now tell me."

"Well, the Rules Committee made all sorts of Rules to keep God from knowing what was going on, so they could take over his responsibilities. All the members of the Rules Committee have an infatuation for playing Supreme Being."

"Why don't they just become God themselves?"

"That would ruin everything. You see, they like to have constant battles for the right to become God. This is just a giant game to them, an extension of childhood. If one of them were to become God, and had to rule openly, it wouldn't be a game any more. It would lose all of the fun, intrigue, suspense, deceit, and diplomacy which all red-blooded boys cherish."

"Why don't you snip their strings?"

"Can't do it; it's against the Rules."

"Why don't you break the Rules?"

"I'm just an observer, not a participant."

"Since you've told me this, will you tell me what I would have become?"

"We can't know how you would have lived unless you lived it, but we do have a file somewhere on how you probably would have, using our refined, 95%-accurate stereo-type classification system."

"That'll do."

"Harvard Business School. Real Estate business, dry cleaning chain, sports franchise; you would have been a multi-millionaire. You enter politics, but catch rockefellaetis . . ."

"What's that?"

"As long as you're satisfied with owning everything, you do fine, but once you try to rule it, you have problems. . . . Family life a disaster, and I don't think you'd like to hear the details. On the whole, an average success story."

"What happens if someone breaks the Rules?"

"If I told you that, I'd be interfering, so you will have to find that out for yourself."

"How do I get back to the throne room from here?"

"Anyway you like."

"What?"

"You're God, aren't you?"

"Oh, yeah. Good-bye."

"Quick! Shove the crown on his head before he disappears again. We don't get a pigeon like this every day, you know! Mutter something to make it sound good."

"Ah rum tum sum ah lum ally rey day sum . . ."

"Don't over do it, that's enough. There. Now, you are officially enthroned as God, and, in accordance with the Rules, you have to sit there and look dignified and God-like. No more of this gallomping about the heavens; it's disgraceful, and, once more, against the Rules. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Mr. Mills, but . . ."

"That's good, and always refer to me as chairman."

"I'm God now, and . . ."

"Don't let it upset you, it could happen to the best of us. Here come your



advisors, we call them thing 1 and thing 2."

"Why's one wearing a dead cat around his neck?"

"Uh, did I hear someone say something about my cat? How dare you talk about my cat when my back is turned! Are you afraid of me or something? If you have anything to say about my cat, say it to my face."

"I think it's obscene."

"You aren't here to think, you're here to do as you're told. And don't you dare call me obscene, you don't know what obscene is, nobody knows what obscene is——but me! Come out into the hall and I'll teach you what obscene is! I know more about obscenity than anyone who ever lived. I'm the most obscene thing in existence, so don't you dare call me obscene!"

"I thought you wanted to know what I thought."

"I just told you that you're not here to think . . ."

"He tried to think, how charmingly inept of him! Just wait until this gets out."

"Don't ever interrupt me again, or you'll be visiting my cat."

"I'm sorry, thing 1."

"Both of you, shut up! I'm God here, and I'll tell you what to do, and that goes for you too, Mr. Chairman."

At this point the two advisors scurry behind the chairman.

"That's against the Rules!"

"God damn the Rules!"

At this point the chairman and the two advisors, shrieking like the Wicked Witch of the West when she melted, along with the rest of the heavens, vanish, and leave him once again elsewhere.

---

## Wayside to me

*Remind me  
                                  not to be  
fasting                               obsessed*

*Tinkerbell and Jiminy clasped  
to me in similarities  
agreeing to stand aside.*

*Pinocchio and Peter P. groomed for me  
whose rhythms I won't intrude.*

*Sidekick story written by;  
Auto—*

*Passive, pleased, pensive, pat.  
A string of somber adjectives used in  
parodies passed above my breath*

*a resolution—Sorry, not me.  
Inaction is the call of the day  
I apologize, but I'm Tonto—  
  to stay*

Michael Norton

( )

*The lovebeat of birds withers so slowly  
waiting for the whisper of spring's sweet sin.  
Hearts held as cornerstones, set for a cradle  
free on a cinder, some remain*

*hollow*

*And so she lay to rest his shell;  
eyes fell upon her tearstained cheeks,  
hands were offered, bells did toll*

*hollow*

*Secure the man, arrest the beast  
my daughter's tender breast he kissed  
to tear his heart, this axe I lend  
for I am a man, and thus I mend.*

*hollow*

*To fill you must reach.  
Can you? If not you're  
hollow.*

Michael Norton

---

## Ashes in the Rain

*I am filled with sorrow  
looking out my window  
at the rain kindly wetting  
the scorched ground.*

*The drops of golden glitter  
envelop charming music,  
which is agony to my ears.  
For my home is far away.*

*As the rain falls, I see  
the ashes of the ruins of my life  
falling in harmony  
with the raindrops.*

*The illusion is shattered—  
For the ground swallows up  
the cold barren beauty  
of the perishing drops.*

*So too empty solitude absorbs my life  
But illusive images still glow,  
glow with golden glitter, unkindly  
scorching my wetted eyes.*

*Maybe tomorrow the rain will die.*

Robert Miller

## From a Bus Window

(to T.A.)

*In a trance  
I stare  
    at the stone wall  
        begging for signs of recognition  
A smile cracks through  
A sincere look  
And in a trance  
I wave  
    at the stone wall  
        begging for signs of recognition*

Joe Fiore

THE BOY loved the snow. When the first slight tremble and smell came into the air he shivered and was happy. He stopped, leaned against a fence and waited.

The first flakes came down. He watched them fall slowly to the concrete, rest, and shiver into a drop. They disappeared into puddles and under the tires of cars. Down, down they still came, each alone in its path from above. But the streets remained bare.

He watched them fall to the concrete and die silently, their multitudinous voices only an easy whisper in the wind. They are, the boy thought, they are like the tiny things that sink through the black to the bottom of the sea and leave forever their fine shells. Each one falls and becomes a part of the floor below. And then, the boy thought, and then, thrust up by the orgasm of the earth, they stand, high white cliffs. "But where do I fall," he said aloud.

As he was thinking the snow began to cover the cars and the streets. It fell white and smooth and down and down. The streetlights went on and the snow shone below the yellow bulbs. No longer did the flakes disappear into the puddles. The boy felt glad as he watched the cars skidding. Just like the cliffs, he thought, just like the great white cliffs. "But where do I go," he said aloud.

The wind blew and the snow still fell. Everything looked so good, so very good. The grey concrete disappeared under the white and a hush fell on the street. The boy felt very fine. He watched the snow cover everything and he thought of the country, long ago. Boughs swinging softly and the high light white that tingled on your face. The yap of your dog off somewhere and the soft crunch of your boots. Across the field to the top of the hill and your footsteps slipping back into the twilight. And then a little farther and your dog, waiting, her tail wagging an angel wing in the snow and you were home.

The boy called his dog and turned into the isolation of an alley. The snow looked so smooth and fine that he did not want to walk over it. His footsteps ruined the flatness behind but ahead it still lay smooth. That's something that's good, he thought. You do not see behind you.

The boy liked to try to open the door of a car without breaking the white covering. Inside he sat still in the pale light and listened to the soft swing of snow. Then he rolled down one of the windows very slowly and looked at the wall of white on the door's edge. That made him feel good, almost too good. He sat and stared and suddenly knocked the wall down. Then he felt bad again and got out of the car.

The snow covered the jagged pieces of glass imbedded on the top of the concrete wall that surrounded the neighbor's yard. White berets formed on trash can covers.

The boy looked up and picked one flake and watched its path to the snow. He saw it and then lost it in the white floor. Looking down he thought, which one is you? And then he understood and said aloud, "Yes, great white cliffs in the sun, but where, shell, are you?"

The boy wrote his name in the snow and watched it disappear. He stared at the spot where the letters had been.

It was his job to clear away the snow. While he worked he was sad and thought of the country again. When his shovel showed the concrete he felt very bad.

The boy went back inside where the dry radiators still clanged in their corners. As he pressed his face to the window the white outside disappeared in the midst of his breath. He turned away.

Outside the snow drifts sadly embraced the walls of the buildings. The wind wailed softly for a moment and then the million tiny cries fell into an easy whisper again.

Timothy Lay

---

## an autumn afternoon outside, hooksett, n. h.

*faded quiet colors  
inducing drowsiness  
sunshine winking at me  
through arboreous eyelashes  
left-over lullabies  
chirped by stubborn sparrows  
peaceful sleep  
on a pine-needle carpet*

fran cusack

# SCZ

... WHAT AM I DOING HERE? I'm not dead, but yet they are burying me. The pallbearers are green and the priest is purple. They're pouring a green ooze on me! Help! Help! I'm drowning! ...

... "Hey man, wake up." No, you're one of them! Get away from me! Thank God he left. "You're as crazy as a stoned cat." No, I know what I see and you're all purple and green freaks who just tried to drown me in a green ooze! ...

... I'm going to kill myself. But how? I'll mangle myself. No, I'll shoot myself with my phaser. Where is it? Spock. "Yes, captain?" Where is my phaser you naughty boy? "Right here in my hand captain. Do you want me to beam it down?" I'll come up and get it. Now who put this cell door in my quarters? Wait a minute. I'm not Captain Kirk. He's in the next cell.

... I am Ludwig van Beethoven. Who swiped my piano? That's all right, I couldn't hear it anyway. ...

... Yabba-dabba-do, Wilma I'm home. "Hey, I'm afraid you have the wrong house." What! I live here, you reefer-smoking fruit. "No, I'm afraid you do have the wrong house. You see, me and my chick have been living here for five months. ..."

That doctor says I show signs of being schizophrenic! What does he know? I have full account of my senses. He doesn't know what he's talking about.

**David LaVie**

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## THE DEVIL AND MR. C

**Curtis H. Mickle**

Illustrated by Curtis Mickle

"...I'd LIKE TO SEE both of us fall deeply in love,

... I'd like to see you naked under the stars above. ... " The radio blasted away while I snapped my fingers and nodded my head.

"... so boogie on reggae woman, what's wrong with you ...

... boogie on reggae woman, what you're tryin' to do. ... " A quick glance at the clock told me that it was time to get dressed. If I was late again Brenda would certainly be furious, and after the last fight we had we didn't speak to one another for two weeks. I really didn't feel like going out tonight, but since 36-24-36 never looked better I decided to go ahead and take her to the game as I had previously planned.

After washing up and having a light snack, I got dressed. "Keys ... check, wallet ... check, tape recorder ... check. I guess that's it." I locked the door, and with trusty portable cassette tape deck in hand I set out for Brenda's.

It was sort of warm out tonight, roughly around 98 degrees. The long walk to Brenda's would seem even longer now. Then out of nowhere — drip — a raindrop fell on my forehead. The weatherman had said that there was a good possibility of rain, so I welcomed the idea of having a cool shower. Drip — drip, drip — drip —. Within minutes it was raining. And within a few more minutes it was coming down in buckets. The rain beat down on my face so hard that it stung. I could hardly keep my eyes open. This certainly wasn't my idea of a cool shower, so I started to run for cover. No sooner than I had taken the first stride, it seemed as if the whole sky had broken loose. Ba-a-a-n-g! A bolt of lightning struck a light pole and leveled it. In its fall the pole toppled the remaining ones. Now the street was pitch black. I couldn't see my hand lifted in front of my face. Half walking and sliding at the same time I staggered blindly not knowing which way to go. In my frenzied



flight I had wandered from the sidewalk and into the street. Panic seized me, and then "Aaaaaaaa!" I felt myself falling; falling down into even darker darkness. As I looked up I caught a faint glimpse of what seemed to be an open manhole. Some moron from the department of public works must have left the cover off. My fall continued for some time and I was puzzled. If this were a sewer I would have been knee-deep in muck and filth by now. I stretched out my arms and felt nothing.

Still falling, I called out. "Help! Help! somebody please help me!" My focus became blurred, and my mind hazy. "Help! hel . . . he . . . hhh . . ."



When I came to I was still clutching my cassette recorder. It's amazing what \$29.95 can mean to a person. "Where the hell am I?" I asked myself. The question answered itself. I stood up and brushed the ash from my trousers and jacket. As far as I could see everything was smokey, and flaming. But the flames weren't red or orange or even blue. They were multicolored, a blend of thousands of hues. The smoke was a deep purple haze. There were many strange shaped figures. They all seemed to be alive, for they swayed as if in a breeze while the purple haze spiraled upwards from them. For minutes I stood motionless staring in awe. Off in the distance I saw a mountain of some sort, so I began walking towards it. I hoped to find someone who could help me out of my awful plight.

As I came nearer the mountain shape object finally took form. It was a castle with a high tower rising from its middle. The top was a glistening gold and the flames flickering against this wrought a mesmerizing sight. A wall of flame surrounded the castle. I moved closer to see

if I could get around this somehow. A most puzzling question arose in my mind: Why wasn't I hot? I was surrounded by flames, yet felt no heat. I lifted my head toward the wall of flame and felt nothing. I moved my hand closer and still felt nothing. The flames, even though they made up a giant conflagration, gave off no heat. It was as if they were for decorative purposes. Not believing my discovery, I toyed with the flames for a while. When I was satisfied that I wouldn't get burned I closed my eyes and jumped through.

From the other side of the wall the castle had looked big. I found this to be quite misleading. In reality it was colossal. Massive pillars rose the full height from ground level to roof, and the tower skirted several stories above that. Wide balconies spanned the width of the castle with smaller ones on between the windows. A huge golden door ornated the front of the castle. I saw no other entranceway so I decided to go through the door. I cautiously crept up the stairs towards the door. Each step I took was even slower than the one before it. Halfway up the staircase I stopped. The golden door swung open. Everything seemed so mechanical. It was as if I was being expected. I proceeded up the stairs and through the door.

Once inside I found myself facing a long corridor. All the walls were bare. There were two crimson circles in the middle of the floor. As I approached them their color changed. First to green, then yellow, then blue. The color change process sped up and I was no longer able to distinguish them. Spinning very slowly at first then rapidly, the figures lifted off from the floor. Courage was the furthest thing from my mind at that time, so I turned back towards the door, only to find it closing. I ran towards it hoping it wouldn't close before I could escape. Too late. I ran into the door in my attempt to flee and the impact sent me sprawling onto the floor. Laughter filled the hall. "Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha. . ."

Turning over I looked up and saw two very black and very beautiful young ladies standing where the two circles had been. I checked them out, looking them over from head to foot. They were both clothed in red robes with gold lace trimming. All the while they continued laughing at me, until finally they spoke.

"I'm sorry if we frightened you. Did you hurt yourself?"

"No I don't think so," I said after a short pause, "but where am I?"

"You mean you don't know?"

"Well I sorta had an idea but I'm not so sure anymore." My eyes peered up and down their frames. I stood up and walked towards them.

"If you're alright there's someone waiting to meet you."

"Waiting to meet me . . . who?"

"The Devil."

"The who?!!!"

"The Devil."

A trickle of perspiration rolled down my left leg. At least I thought it was perspiration.

"Uh-uh, no-no not me. Now if you two ladies will kindly show me the way out of here I'll be on my way."

"Sorry, but only the Devil can permit you to leave."

"Well, suppose you just told me the way out and I could . . . sorta . . . sn- . . . sneak . . . out. Why are you shaking your head?"

"Let's go."

"Are you sure this is the only way out?"

"Yes."

I paused a while to think it over. If I had come this far I might as well go all the way.

"Alright let's go."

The three of us set out walking down the corridor. At the end of the hall there was another door, which we soon arrived at.

"Right through that door."

"What door? . . . oh . . . oh . . . that door."

I put my hand on the knob and turned it slowly. Slow, slower, and even more slowly I entered the room, with eyes closed of course, and shut the door. For a moment I just stood there, clutching my cassette recorder. It's amazing what \$29.95 can mean to a person. Then I opened my eyes, the left one first and then the right one. My mouth flew open and my jaw just hung there immovable. In front of me was standing the most sensuous, ravishing black woman I had ever seen. Her enormous 'fro flopped down over the silky smooth brown skin of her shoulders. She wore gold and diamond rings and bracelets about her body. Her long black robe hid nothing

of what couldn't be noticed otherwise. I thought 36-24-36 was good but not any more. This fine black mamma would make Lola Falana, Syreeta Wright and Pattie LaBelle look like a bunch of rookies. Finally coming to my senses I spoke.

"Hey, hey, hey what's happenin' foxy mamma. I thought this was hell, but after seeing you I know better um-um-um-." My eyes wandered up, down . . . up, down . . .

"I see you've finally arrived," she said in a soft, sweet voice. "I've been watching you since you dropped in." She then pointed to a large closed-circuit screen in one corner of the floor. "So tell me what's your name?"

"Mr. C."

"Well . . . Mr. C . . . in case you'd like to change into something more comfortable there are some robes in that chest and you can change in the room to the right. I'll be back shortly."

I walked over to the chest and lifted the lid. Reaching inside I selected a most colorful robe and went to the room to change into it. By the time I had returned the main room had undergone a vast change. Mats and stuffed pillows were sprawled about the floor. Incense was burning and a sweet scent engulfed the room. A flame of a thousand colors was burning dimly in a recessed hollow in the center of the room. Exotic foods lay on silver trays surrounding the hollow.

"Have a seat Mr. C."

"Hey, . . . this is a nice set-up, . . . very nice." I looked around the room a while and then turned my attention back to her. "You never told me your name, and you definitely don't look like a demon."

"Just call me Faith."

"Okay . . . Faith."

We smiled at each other. She handed me a golden goblet and proceeded to fill it with wine. The setting was perfect.

"Yeah . . . like I said this is nice. It's a shame I'll have to leave soon."

"You have to leave soon . . . why?"

"I don't have to, but I-I thought that you might . . ."

"You can stay as long as you want."

"Serious business?"

"Serious business."

"Do you know what Faith?"

"What?"

"You are a little devil."



We both laughed at the pun and sipped some wine. Now all the situation needed was a little music. I reached over and pushed the button on my tape player. The selection which came on was entitled "Fire" by the Ohio Players. I turned the volume on high. "... when you shake what you've got and girl you've got a lot you're really something child, yes you are, and when you're hot you're hot you really shoot your shot you're dynamite child ... yeah ..."

She listened for a while and then responded.

"That's hip! Well Mr. C, since you're going to be here for some time, why don't you tell me something about yourself."

"Alright ... I-I-I- ..."

"Hey you okay down there?!"

"W-wh-what's going on?" Directly above me was a man with a helmet on. There was a light attached to the front of the helmet. I squinted my eyes to lessen the irritation.

"You okay down there?"

"Yes, I think so." I looked around me and saw pipelines and cables everywhere. I also noticed that I was sitting in a stream of water.

"I called to you when I saw you heading for the hole, but I guess you didn't hear me. I'll have you out in a second, hold on to the end of this rope."

As the rope slowly descended I thought about what had happened. I shook my head and thought to myself, "um ... um ... um, I sure wish it could have been for real." I grabbed onto the rope and felt myself rising slowly. At length, the opening was within reach.

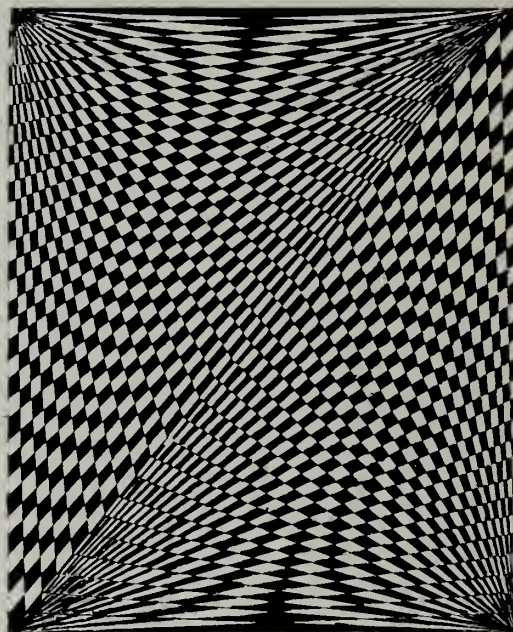
"Thanks a lot, I never could have gotten out without you." No sooner than I had spoken, I lost my grip. As I fell downwards I noticed that the stream had vanished. There was nothing below me now but darkness and space. Not to be outdone again, I pinched myself.

"Ouch!" When I felt the pain all I did was laugh.



*four or five blind mice*  
*(tape overed eyes but peels at the edges*  
*for some) and mercurial sadly Allison*  
*vision of the mouse who played smoothing the tape*  
*on his eyes (something to do with his hands)*  
*original mistletoe and it's easier to watch the tree lights*  
*blink*  
*and hope them to be snuffed (and you)*  
*sit on your hands, as claws riveting through\**  
*damnedly she sees, notices*  
*(go away*  
*you must I can*  
*not talk*  
*to you)*  
*nice words of persistence*  
*in-ef-fec-tu-al, uh, pencils*  
*for the blind man*  
*sits loves looks*  
*but the far of his feared glance drops his hand*  
*walks him away\**  
*so another*  
*another mouse*  
*struggled confused only over who's to peel the tape*  
*both ends become the middle*  
*gregarious partying mouse*  
*formed a circle a rude figure and she*  
*strays (pull metaphysical) towards the center*  
*needs all not to have nothing*  
*needs one more than any*  
*and all more than one\**  
*(trees collapsbranching into one/other*  
*fall where they may*  
*and if some are more blind*  
*it does not hurt the moreneeded lessblind*  
*that she*  
*lets them see)\*\*\*\*\**  
*tree lights blink through steadied rain*  
*the mice would hate*  
*the sight but missed through mistletoe*

Steve Messina (12/22/74)



John Workman

## SINECURE

*burn burn*  
*burn*  
*burn*  
*burn burn*  
*burn burn burn*  
*burn*  
*burn*  
*burn*

Mike Coffey



# THE CATALYST

Paul Phillips

Illustrated by Peter Phillips

## I.

"WE ARE POLITICAL REBELS!"

The mob cheered.

"WE DEMAND OUR RIGHTS!"

Again, the throng cheered.

"HARCONE HAS STOLEN OUR SCHOOLS! HE HAS STOLEN OUR CHURCHES AND PLACES OF WORSHIP! HE HAS STOLEN OUR COMMUNICATIONS!"

As out of one mouth, the crowd roared, "Death to Harcone! Death to Harcone!"

"WE DEMAND OUR RIGHT TO LEARN THE WAY WE WANT TO! TO PRAY AS WE WISH! WE DEMAND OUR FREEDOM OF SPEECH, OUR FREEDOM OF THE PRESS! WE DEMAND OUR FREEDOM TO BEAR ARMS!"

Suddenly, several wooden crates appeared in the crowd. They were thrown to the ground, smashing them and revealing their contents: guns, clubs, pipes of every size. These were quickly scooped up and distributed among the crowd. Soon, every man and woman held a weapon in his or her hand. Their eyes burned with murderous anger.

Anton Paar, the leader of the group and the man who had been speaking, jumped up from his seat on the platform. From out of nowhere, his group had weapons! He ran to the microphone, this time yelling, "NO! PUT DOWN THE WEAPONS! THIS IS A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION!" But, this time, his words fell on deaf ears. The crowd had been turned, in mere seconds, from a group of non-violent political demonstrators, into a mob of blood-thirsty animals.

They broke into a run, deserting their leader, and heading toward the Capitol Building at the end of the street. There was no stopping them now.

Overhead appeared nearly a hundred robo-cars, coming to break up this disturbance. They hung motionless for a split-second, then plummeted earthward, pulling up to a stop seconds before disaster. These were the Capitol Robots, trained in warfare and programmed in riot control.

As each air-car landed, the doors swung open and a spate of massive robots, glistening silver in the sunlight, flowed from within, bearing down swiftly on Paar's mob.

But the rebels were not so easily defeated. They turned on the law machines, readying their weapons. As the robots converged with the crowd, each was met with a pounding of a pipe or club or shots from a gun. Pieces of robot flew through the air under the incessant beating of the clubs, and several machines exploded, their innards destroyed by bullets. After about ten robots had been completely destroyed, the others turned and fled. Their prime directive was self-preservation.

After they had loaded their rifles and built-in guns, however, the robots' second directive took over: quelling of the riot. They plunged ahead again, launching themselves back into the crowd. This time, it was the rebels who reeled backward, never to rise again, or who fell to the concrete, writhing in their own blood. In minutes it was over. At least half of the rebels had fallen, never to disturb the Capitol Robots again. The others were either clubbed into senselessness, or rounded up like a herd of cattle and quickly taken to the prisons.

\* \* \* \* \*

"We are political revolutionaries," said Paar, as he sat in the witness chair in the courtroom. "My group is against political control of education, religion, industry and communications. However, we **are** a peaceful group."

The attorney for the prosecution nodded, and asked, "Then, Mr. Paar, how do you explain the fact that there were several hundred weapons at your demonstration?"

"People will be people, sir," replied the leader of the group. "No doubt, a few of my people thought they could help our cause by bringing weapons for our protection. However, none of my executives, or I planned it. It was none of our doing."

"Mr. Paar," said the lawyer, picking up a sheaf of papers from his table.



"Many of you people have already testified that you shouted, 'WE DEMAND OUR FREEDOM TO BEAR ARMS!' right before the weapons were brought out."

Paar nodded.

"Then, sir," continued the attorney. "Isn't it possible that your words inspired your people to uncover their weapons, whereas, had you not said it, they would not have?"

The leader began to protest, but his lawyer objected first: "I object, your Honor. Prosecution is leading the witness."

"Your Honor," said the prosecutor, "I am simply trying to determine whether Mr. Paar urged, if not recommended, that his people break out their weapons."

Objection sustained," said the judge. "Mr. Prosecutor, will you rephrase your question?"

"Yes, your Honor." The lawyer turned back to Paar. "Mr. Paar, did you have any knowledge that there would be weapons at your rally?"

"No, sir, I did not," came the reply.

"Yet, as leader of the group, it was your duty to make certain there would be no violence."

Paar nodded.

"Then, would it also be your responsibility to keep your people in order?"

"Yes."

The lawyer turned. "No more questions, your Honor."

Thus, the trial continued. Witnesses came and went, and each was carefully questioned by the two lawyers, until, at last, the jury was sent to its chambers to reach the verdict. The twelve people returned not half an hour later. The chairman spoke up when called on for the verdict:

"We find Anton Paar and his group guilty of destruction of Federal Property, in that they willingly destroyed eleven robo-machines, carrying concealed weapons and using same, and gathering in a public place without permission of city officials."

The judge slammed his gavel on the bench. "Mr. Paar, having found you guilty of all the specified charges, this court decrees that you and your group shall be exiled from Earth for a period of fifteen solar years to live on Mars Colony I, after which time, you may, if you wish, return to this planet to restart your lives." Again, the hammer banged, and the trial declared over. The court was adjourned.

Anton Paar stood up. He knew that Martian life would be hard at first, but he also knew that he and his people could make Mars into a home.

\* \* \* \* \*

President Carl Harcone sat at his huge caken desk, puffing on a cigar and talking on the telephone. "What?" he said suddenly, "Another one? When? Just now? He slammed the receiver onto its hook on the phone. He turned to his Vice President, Pagette, who sat opposite the president, in a leather chair. "Another raid," said Harcone. He smashed his cigar into shreds in an ashtray. "Damn!" he cursed. "I thought that, with Paar's group gone, the rebellions would end. They're just beginning!"

"I hear that the people are angry because you told the judge what to do with Paar even before the trial started."

"How in hell did they find out, anyway?" demanded the president.

"Does it matter?" replied the VP. "What **does** matter is that they're out for your blood."

Harcone leaned back in his chair. "These people are so damned ungrateful, anyway. How in hell is a man supposed to control them?"

"The past forty-four presidents didn't have much trouble."

"I don't care about the past! These people are here now, and I have to do something about them before it really gets out of hand."

Pageette frowned. "I'd say it was rather out of hand now," he said.

Harcone knifed his VP with a glance.

Suddenly, the sky was illuminated brightly, and a few seconds later, the ear-splitting sound resounded through the air. Harcone jumped out of his chair and ran to the window. Again he cursed. "Another damned rebel explosion." He squinted through the smoke that enveloped the building which had been blown up. "Looks like the Lincoln Memorial," said the president. Out loud, Harcone said, "Useless building anyway." Inside, he thought, This is the first action. It won't be the last.

\* \* \* \* \*

The colony was circular in shape, and covered by a huge dome that not only circulated Earth-like air, but also provided warmth and coolness for day and night. There was, however, never a minute when the temperature dropped below seventy degrees Fahrenheit. The ground had been cultivated even before the exiles had arrived, by robot settlers who were sent to prepare the planet for human habitation. It was they who had built the dome and the houses and who had laid out the streets and plots of land. So, life was hard on Mars, but not too hard. With a little work, one could do very well, indeed.

Anton Paar was walking down the Main Street of Colony I with his second-in-command, Cameron Burke, a man about ten years older than Paar. The two were inspecting the colony, as they did every month, as they had done four times so far.

"Food production is up," said Burke, reading from a clipboard of papers in his hands. "And the water-pipe system has just been completed, and the water-production system is on the verge of completion. In another two days, we'll have fresh, cold water, just like on Earth. The old water that we took along is about out, anyway. I guess we timed it perfectly."

"Good! Good!" Paar smiled. Things were going much better than he had at first thought they would. Apparently, he had picked some industrious people

when he had chosen his group of rebels. They had been hard workers and eager settlers. In no time at all, it seemed, they had raised a real town from the Martian dirt. A few more years, Paar thought, and Mars might even become Earth II, where people would want to live, even without being exiled.

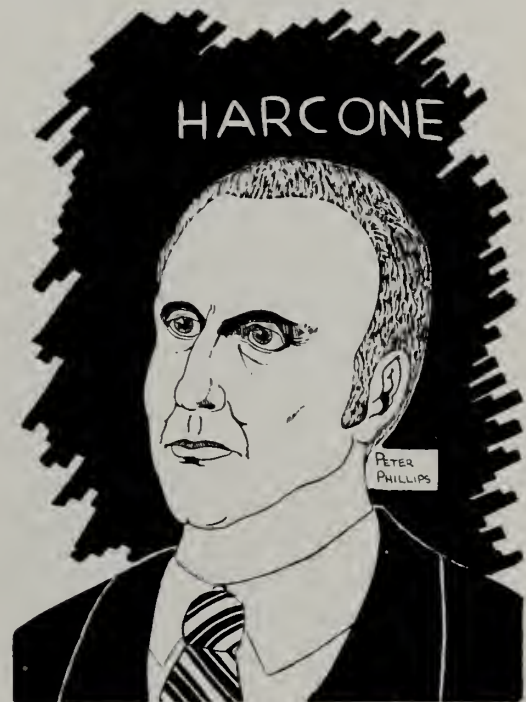
His thoughts drifted back to Earth. He had lost half of his contingent there, in that useless battle with the Capitol Robots. It had been a waste to lose such good men, Paar knew, but, then again, they had not died in vain. It was their deaths that had inspired the mob to fight on, and destroy some more robots. Their actions had gotten them exiled to Mars, where life was so much better than on Earth. There were no economic problems, or religious problems. There were no wars. . . .

\* \* \* \* \*

"What?" Harcone gasped again. "Bombs? . . . I'll . . . I'll get on it right now. What? No, you get them back! I'll . . . make a statement. YES!!! Now!" He slammed the phone down again. His face was pale, his lips trembling. "The rebels have got three atom bombs," he told Pageette.

"What?"

"Atom bombs! They have three!"







"You'll make a statement?"

Harcone shook his head. "I'm getting to a shelter."

"But, the people have to know!"

"You fool! It's the people who are doing it!" He rose from his desk and ran toward the door, waving for his vice-president to follow.

Pageette got up, still unwilling, and followed his president toward the shelter that had been built into the building.

"Are they going to detonate it?" asked the VP when the two were in the basement, in the bomb shelter.

"Judging by the things they've done so far, I'd say yes. But, I don't know."

"Have you ordered the military in?"

Harcone nodded. "Get upstairs to see if the generals have arrived. I forgot to leave a message."

Pageette nodded and pushed open the door, running up the stairs swiftly.

At that moment, the capital city disappeared from the country-side. Where there had been homes, there were craters. Where there had been offices, there was rubble. Where there had been government buildings, there was air. Everything was gone, all in a moment, and all with only one bomb. Harcone lived on, however, for he had been sitting in his shelter. Pageette disappeared with the rest of the White House, as did the

generals in conference above him. Harcone was alive, though, and was still president of a country which had no capital, of a country that would soon be nothing more than separate states, each fighting for survival in a world controlled by rebels.

And Paar and his group lived on in happiness on Mars. They were soon forgotten as men. . . .

## II.

### The Result

"No, Kama, it's absolutely ridiculous!" King Ako slumped back in his chair. "Anything which you have found in the ancient ruins is just a toy or a model. Now leave me! Your idiotic notions bore me!" Ako pointed toward the door.

"But, Ako! This is a time machine! It works just as the glass candles you found that run on tiny lightning bolts. This will, also —"

"LEAVE!" Ako nearly jumped from his seat.

Kama, the Akoun Royal Scientist, nodded and bowed, leaving the room backwards.

Seconds later, the door reopened. This time, it was Hasa, the Grand-Vizier. Even as he strode forth boldly into the room, however, the west-wing of the palace burst into flames, crumbling into dust like a dried sand castle in the wind.

"Another raid?" Ako asked of his vizier.

Hasa nodded. "I'm afraid so, Your Majesty. The west sector."

"By Paar!" the king cursed. "I want immediate, full strength retaliation!"

"Yes, sire." Hasa spun on his thickly-soled boots and quickly disappeared through the arched door.

Ako sighed. He was a majestic ruler, nearly six feet high, with piercing black eyes. He had been ruler for ten years now, yet the people were still not with him. He was cheap with money, and always had to live in luxury, because it was his "style".

He rose from the throne, stroking on a graying beard, and left the room, into the corridor beyond.

\* \* \* \* \*

"How much did they get?"

Tura, the palace weapons officer, glanced at a parchment on his deck. "Besides destroying the west wing of



the palace, sire, the rebels got six more nukes and atom bombs."

Ako nodded sternly. With those weapons, he thought, we can expect some pretty big losses in the near future. "Double the guard. Anyone comes in here without proper voice ID with my approval, shoot to kill and ask questions later."

Suddenly, Vizier Hasa burst into the room. He bowed to Ako, then, breathing heavily, reported, "Sire! Three more raids just a few minutes ago! The royal granary, some religious ruins and the Foreign Embassy!"

"Paar damn it! How many injured?"

"Forty-two dead and an uncounted injured."

Ako dismissed his vizier with a wave, closing his eyes in thought. "How are they getting in?" he demanded of his munitions officer. "What do we have here? An infiltrator?"

Tura shrugged. "I won't know, sire, but, an atom bomb is a key to many doors."

\* \* \* \* \*

"I've read dozens of books brought to me by greedy archaeologists looking for an extra copper," said Kama to Hasa. Both were seated in Kama's Royal Science Chamber. "Most of them are science texts." The Scientist picked a leather bound volume off his acrylic desk. "Of course, I don't understand all of them." He chuckled. "Sometimes, I think it's all lies, with this flying stuff, but, there's no doubting the ancients."

"What are you working on now?"

Kama smiled. "I never really work on anything. I read in a book once that most of the ancient inventions were discovered by accident. I'm just starting all over again, trying, hoping for the same accidents to happen again. Right now, King Ako wants me to create a better, more efficient nuke, but, I wouldn't know where to start."

Hasa grunted. "The rebels got six more nukes this morning," he said.

Kama nodded. "No doubt King Ako's boiling mad."

"That's an understatement."

"I'd thought so. You see, since the first Akoun king, a legendary figure named Harcone, took over power, the scientists then, and now, have been unable to recreate the atom bomb. Whatever is stolen by the rebels can't be replaced."

Hasa understood. "Don't the rebels have their own scientists?"

"I don't know. I never thought about it. Why?"

"Well, if they had scientists, too, couldn't they be working on a better bomb, too?"

Kama nodded slowly. "I suppose so. Neither Ako nor I ever thought of it. It **could** be a problem."

"Worse than that," said Hasa. "If they recreate the bomb before us, it could mean our destruction."

Kama nodded. It was the truth.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Three houses destroyed and some ancient ruins."

Ako frowned. "And them?"

Hasa shrugged. "We can't tell, your Highness."

"Can't tell? What do you mean?" demanded the king.

"Well, we set off some Class A bombs, sire, so we must have hit something."

"Sure," mumbled Ako. "How close are they, anyway?"

Hasa glanced out the window. The air was full of gray smoke, blanketing the green courtyard of King Ako and the beautiful prairie beyond. It was a pity to have this country needlessly destroyed by nuclear bombs, but, it was a price one had to pay. It was, after all, Ako's

## HASA



fault. His greediness had made him raise the taxes to unbelievable levels. Ako was a fool to believe the people would simply sit by and slice off half their earnings for a greedy ruler. And so, they had revolted. First, it had been little sword skirmishes. But then, the rebels had broken into the weapons room and stolen an A bomb. After that, there was no stopping the rebels. Raid after raid had only weakened Ako's army. Now, it was on the verge of surrender. Another losing battle for Ako and the war would be over, with the Akoun military losing.

"They're about five miles south of the castle, sire." Hasa turned from the window. "And advancing rapidly," he added.

"Tell the general to maintain firing and cut off the enemy's advance. They're much too close for comfort."

"Yes, sire." Hasa bowed and quickly left the room.

Ako leaned on his elbow. How had he let matters reach their climax? He should have crushed the opposition with his first chance, instead of letting the rebels get the bombs. Now, it was too late.

Suddenly, the sky erupted in a brilliant flash of red and orange. The palace rocked and the walls crumbled to the ground. Ako jumped up and ran to the window, even as the floor beneath his feet cracked and fell into dust. . . .

\* \* \* \* \*

"Is he . . . dead?"

Kama shook his head. "Almost, Hasa. His body was badly pummelled by falling rocks and pretty badly burned by the heat of the explosion."

Hasa was still frightened. "Will he live?"

The scientist shrugged. "I can't say. I'm no doctor." He bent down, putting a hand to his mouth. "But don't tell that to Ako. He thinks a scientist is someone who can raise demons and cure the incurable." He chuckled.

"Don't joke, Kama. If King Ako dies, our cause dies, too, and the rebels take over."

Kama's face paled and the smile faded. He lowered his eyes. "I know."

\* \* \* \* \*

The man was small, but powerfully built. His chest were broad, his neck thick. His hands were steel vises. His eyes were cautious and receptive. Nothing could get by them.

He crawled through the tunnel, moving away all earthen obstacles without slowing. He moved through the hole like a gopher, with skill and experience. At last, he reached the end of the underground tunnel. The hole turned upwards and was blocked by a huge slab of marble. With straining arms, the rebel pushed away the stone and pulled himself up into the chamber above. He looked around carefully, chose his route, and quickly followed it.

The guard outside the Science Chamber stirred uneasily, reaching for his sword. Something had moved in the candlelit-dimness ahead. Suddenly, a thick arm clenched about the guard's neck. In seconds, his body fell limp to the floor. Not a sound had been made.

The rebel pushed open the door quickly and jumped into the room, brandishing a poniard. He ran toward the bed at the back of the room. Four guards leapt up, grasping for their weapons, but it was too late. The rebel reached the bed and slashed down with his dagger into Ako's chest. The blood had spurted by the time the guards reached the scene. They all stabbed forward into the rebel, who smiled at them before falling dead to the marble floor. It had been a suicide mission, after all.

\* \* \* \* \*

"What now?" Hasa looked deeply into the eyes of Kama, begging for an answer. "That steel door is only prologing the agony."

Kama glanced toward the metal barrier, a relic from the ancient days. It was at least a foot and a half thick, with four three and a half inch bolts locking the two Akoun cabinet members off from the rest of the world. Muffled thumps resounded from the door. In a few moments, it would be over. . . . Even steel couldn't stand the strain of seventy battering rebels.

"I . . . I have an answer."

Hasa's eyes widened. "What?"

Kama reiterated. "I have an answer." He lowered his eyes. "Ako told me once that it was ridiculous. An idiotic notion, he said." He stood up and walked toward a door at the back of the room, still explaining. "He said it was a myth, this machine." He opened the door. Inside was a huge nearly square machine of the finest steel.

"What is it?"

Kama rubbed the smooth metal. "My time machine." He turned toward Hasa. "I found it in a deserted museum. I have never tried it." He shrugged. "Fear, whatever. I saved it for the most necessary of times. I shall only use it once."

The pounding on the door increased. One the the bolts loosened and fell to the floor.

Hasa glanced toward the door. "We have to use it!"

"No! It's the reason why the world is like it is now! I can't add to this planet's problems! If we go back, we'll change the past . . . and the future."

The door loosened off its hinged.

"Now!" screamed Hasa. He shoved the scientist into the seat of the machine and climbed in himself. "Make it work now!"

Kama shook his head defiantly.

Suddenly, the door crashed to the floor, and seventy rebels flowed in like a raging hurricane ocean. With brandished knives, they headed for the two cabinet members.

Kama gulped, and threw the switch. The machine trembled and disappeared.

And the rebels disappeared. And the smoke cleared. And the craters filled. There were no more bombs. There were no more wars. Only Man. And he gazed down at the paradise that was Earth.

*A misplaced strand of gold  
Ripples the pool  
Burning eyes are reflected  
in the shadows  
'w/  
venom&  
spitfire'*

*Two lovers are absent  
All lovers stand near  
Placing flowers at the altars  
Lighting candles in devotion  
\*\*\*\*\**

*You stand  
naked  
in a grove of  
virgin  
birch  
Persephone snickers  
The bastard smiles  
Does it matter.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*All lovers stand near  
w/carefully placed knots  
in their stomachs  
Begging  
to gain admiration  
'each morning beside yourself  
covered in dew  
You're the lady of night  
You're the child of day  
But when you've been stripped  
Love's faded away'  
You want  
only virgins and clowns  
Virgins  
to abuse  
Clowns  
to fool  
'w/  
venom&  
spitfire'  
'I never thought I could act this way  
But I got to say  
That I just don't get it . . .'*



Bruce Wisentaner



Bruce Wisentaner

Joe Fiore



“ ‘ALRIGHT,’ CONCEDED THE NEWEST arrival to the faculty of Lt. Delucifer Elementary School, ‘we won’t be assigned work for the vacation. But,’ she quickly added realizing the possibility of an outbreak of chaos, ‘I would like to take a headcount.’ Instinctively, all the class members raised their right paws.

There appeared to be a slight mishap in the rear of the room, which when investigated by Ali, the C.A. (class administrator) I previously mentioned, turned out to be a not too even scuffle; four husky boys lined up over one rather weak individual, who seemed as if he was drowning in solitude.

When Ali came closer, her jaw dropped, eyes stared blankly, and arms slunk to her sides as women’s arms are wont to do from time to time. The boy stood four feet from head to toe and in those four feet not one square inch of fur could be found. Only his head was covered and that was decked with nothing more than a stringy array of clumped, single hairs.

Well, needless to say, the blame fell obviously and justly upon this boy, who could hardly be described as human. So naturally he was ushered out of the classroom in order to protect the minds of other, normal students.

The reason I mentioned this was that I was reading the paper today and I came across a picture of a soldier, who I am sure is that very same boy. That boy was a yellowbelly then and he is one now, but this time he’s a dead one. It says he was killed leading a charge, except I know the real story. He was told to charge a hill, but he didn’t charge. He stood up, dropped his gun, and said something really funny. I have to remember this exactly. Oh yes! ‘Thinking in order to follow instructions is instinct; thinking to decide yourself is a man.’”

**Michael Norton**



Ted Asbergs



*Mist as sweet as the  
 Taste of dew turning,  
 Gathering, going on out  
 Of reach indefinitely.  
 Nothingness is like a  
 Blanket covering the  
 Beds of space. A lonely  
 Spark of life appears  
 Having nothing and going nowhere. Revolving like a  
 Ball, it takes a shape unknown to the profound  
 Darkness. A feeling of love flourishes among everything,  
 Creating images as it carries out its unique duties  
 Whose root of being is hidden. But where? Over the  
 Horizon is a seemingly magical world never before recognized.  
 Suddenly, a clear view of the images is to be seen;  
 Who they are or where they  
 Came from is a secret not  
 To be disclosed for centuries.  
 The earth is now completed  
 By a mysterious spirit that is  
 Unexplainable now, and will remain  
 As such until the new image is destroyed.*

Carolyn DePascale

#538

*Mine as Galilee, who lack!  
 Through dust you speak,  
 but listen to me;  
 my shoulders too are round.*

*Climb throughin to reach that virtue  
 red as lust, dark as death.  
 Watch me and do as I do,  
 as I hurl myself — dear, wretched wrath*

*That Christ's crucifix, crown of burning barbs!  
 That brace of steel, strong, stoic, still!  
 Quickly though, it crisply cracks the neck;  
 its grinding motion; the gaping, gashed, red gut*

*Through this agent, I batter the crowd  
 to plunder and build my Gideon.  
 While through this anger, resolute, resolved,  
 my legs grow tight, my mind locks.*

Michael Norton

*And I find the horn, I climb the fire,  
 I steal my steed, and I mount your thunder,  
 and I mount your thunder, and I mount . . .*

*. . . your thunder.*

# Bring Back Travel Time

—Photography by Peter Cassidy

Steve Messina

*"it's something I think's worthwhile  
if the puppet makes you smile  
if not then you're throwing stones,  
throwing stones, throwing stones . . ."*

—"Holiday," Bee Gees, heard in anteroom 2/16/74

*who would see his small mother in the pictures on the game  
who would read too much Freud and still not understand  
who would sell his body for his lungs' song in the room alone  
and daily write on the wall: "BRING BACK TRAVEL TIME"*

*Ken the eunuch genius moves quickly,  
fast beyond to notice nothing  
from the house where his mother, phoned,  
consoles  
the teared friend of Ken's late father,  
long-distance reminiscence,  
war and highschool.  
Door closing, Ken hears  
"JUST like his father . . . same eyes . . .  
same height . . ."*

*KEN ARE YOU GONNA BE WARM  
ENOUGH IN THAT?"*

*door silent closed on apronstrung words.*

*Warm enough in his Virility Coat:  
furlined red, his father's, worn only  
the week before he died, on a  
last arcade day.*

*Left Ken with only three things:  
warm mental image, coat, and a game  
Travel Time, a small novelty,  
father plays in the pinball room, shouting  
proud glee, "Hey you won!" to small uplifted Ken  
who flips maybe once, ineffectual,  
accomplished little boy . . .  
years past, now there again to watch  
Dan obsessed, winning Travel Time, loudly  
dignity, watch Phil and Lance lose to themselves:  
all time search for a win,*

*for a Canaan for Ken.*

*"Teach me to touch you" he has cried believing  
to many denying,  
having always said nothing at all,  
still, silent violent as he moves  
self-deserted, fearful, careless, singing,  
silent.*

*Silence a cough echoes  
recurrent on this accustomed trip  
so hated, no more the curved corners  
of Frisbee games and gales.  
When thirteen years old and more  
the trip to the room had carried  
the piercer sound of championing voices*

*which bit by bit in two and a half years quickly  
were vanned away*

*So what remains on the walls of Plato's cave?  
A higher level of expression should be,  
and the words for this exist in quarter Time;  
BRING BACK TRAVEL TIME should be  
the visual sensation  
to pair with the hanging from the wrist which  
stops the falling.*

*But these words would communicate  
and Ken can only bear them to be seen where  
they are known by heart*

*and the pinball room is the only place Ken is  
sure he's been where the words apply  
and he writes them there anyway.*

*Where then should the words be seen?*

*Supposed in No Stops  
where surely they wouldn't need transliteration  
into speech*

*but what appears on this route in Ken's  
penurious hand now clutching dust?*

*Bad jokes, and calls for Moses,  
and more he would like to see,  
to be only disappointed,  
as one way the door is opened:  
stretch marks appear on the walls  
and the door is closed.*

*So this is the place where your moves are met  
with suitable responses*

*The games will only take so much but it's  
more than you ever give*

*So many lighted tables lighting darkened  
extended will*

*And a ten-year-old kid on a laughing jag  
where Travel Time used to be.*

*It's a false lyricism, Ken knows, no poesy.*

*Glossing the present is the one thing worse than  
glossing the past.*

*But isn't it true that Travel Time had a magick  
as much as it's true that the mind can believe  
anything?*

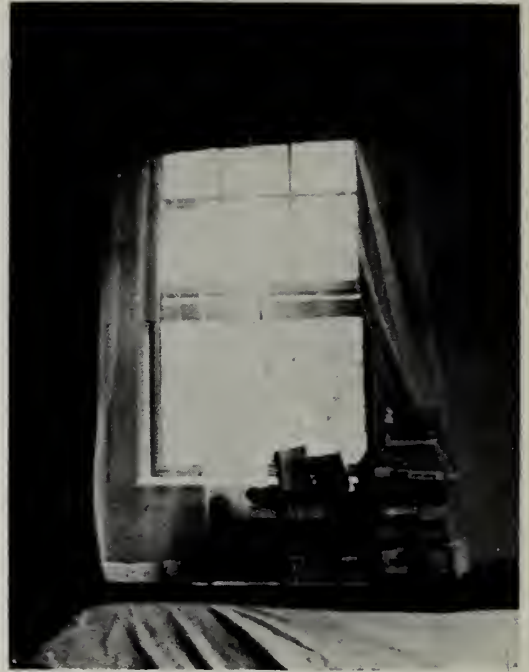
you buy sixty seconds with unlimited  
 options  
 and you can stop the clock as many times  
 as there is time  
 instead of five balls you're out and hope  
 for a match  
 the poor boys replay  
 you light up the figures that play ball  
 doubtless  
 around the words TRAVEL TIME  
 shrilled voices drowned by the replay thud  
 that adds time to your clock,  
 once always there; now shades of fact  
 believed ingrained  
 and lost return as  
 dull/idle belief stirs this descending script:  
 "BRING BACK TRAVEL TIME,"  
 on a muddled wall, already  
 stiff with verbiage: "TAKE HER  
 AWAY FROM ME  
 ANYONE WHO TRIES DIES!"  
 bronzed vision, Hefner's Video Machine,  
 shot horror,  
 the Wailing Wall surely, surely, . . .

So Ken the Pisces boy  
 has now arrived for his friends,  
 to try them, inquiring,  
 and compare what they could do:  
 wonder why they insist on believing  
 that his problems lay untied in tangles  
 "The simplest possible solution," he says,  
 "never always applies." "Ken,  
 when you're through complaining tell me,"  
 says Phil,  
 not unkindly, the first of the friends, who  
 understands  
 more than most anyone.  
 Phil, named as a squire, is held back  
 slight by a nature no one would call his,  
 hard to dare greatness, then harder,  
 powered to go on, to acquiesce.  
 Amazing the women, perceptive  
 who like overlooking  
 the fact that Phil can be everything for the  
 nights of someone,  
 who have never seen a squire's tears.  
 More reluctant a squire than Gil,  
 who serves and takes roughly in proportion,  
 shy once then taken bold  
 to the movements of Allison.  
 Allison may as well be here  
 but the smile on Gil's face won't tell  
 (a truism, that  
 certainty of direction).  
 Allison, spoken as bitch,  
 stands as a naked virgin  
 in the minds of everyone,  
 living time, all the higher thoughts,  
 sadsensitive walk,

the life-giving queen.  
 She is the former dream, lately revived,  
 for Ken; the sensuous friend for Phil;  
 for Gil, the love, the willing touch,  
 the Gordian cryptographer;  
 for Dan, who is a sage eighteen,  
 she is parts of this and more:  
 a friend in need, a daughter figure, not  
 the girls he has held, although  
 his mind could have that;  
 for Lance she has been the most: failed  
 matchmaker (one of her few failures),  
 sometime consoler, frequent sadly caller,  
 requiring sad stories and sympathy—  
 Lance she understands, as she would have to  
 being herself the total of so much, though hers  
 is most in harmony, his in conflict.  
 The players, long known in this play/room,  
 most sombered by the glare if by nothing else,  
 have acquired the habit by now of living in poems  
 spoken in shared or often unshared words:  
 a huddled mass—the smallest speaks to drowning:  
 Ken the eunuch genius—understood fortunes he  
 cannot keep;  
 Ken the Pisces boy—pass on his voice when he sings  
 his free;  
 Ken the mightless artist—dimmed his unrealistic  
 hopes  
 of self-perpetuation through the words of his  
 release.  
 Ken says "What have I got to do?" and Phil replies  
 "Anything you want to", but  
 Dan, with a wisdom falsely trusted  
 (his own belief making it so) says "You know,  
 nobody comes to a place like this just to watch."  
 Crimsoned Ken, moved to speak, speaks nothing,  
 powerless,  
 open mouth of a child of everyone's fancy  
 speaks finally, to watch.  
 "You can't watch all of your life . . ."  
 He searches vain for a substitute  
 in dark fluorescing hum, sees only  
 movement, chemicals on the floor  
 /half-lives unbearable slow to pass/  
 and a misplaced heap playing Cabaret  
 the only game for a tinker's dime.  
 The heap asleep and trying to tilt  
 reads the fine print "Remember, this is a  
 Gravity Game!"  
 laughs, watches the dropping ball, laughs at  
 that, everything,  
 dead serious—  
 This is a serious matter, the condition of the  
 matter in the balls  
 but really there's only one ball and it comes  
 back five times or more.  
 But how will he replay when he turns and  
 sleeping consults the Poundweight calligraphy



when to place it under the game sends the ball  
 skittering to an unbalanced side?  
 How will he play his concerto of silence and  
 hope to attract attention?  
 How will he play the game again when he  
 doesn't believe in dimes?  
 He is a treadmilled laborer  
 trying to count the steps  
 looking for obvious landmarks  
 when all the steps look alike.  
 He is a brilliant scribe  
 it's the writing that keeps him going,  
 waiting to last forever, blissful  
 deadened and spent to stain alive  
 as Ron plays boldly Stardust  
 just to laugh at the pain in his fingers  
 cramped complacency,—  
 no change,  
 feeding dollar bills into the game.  
 Moved to sides, Ken recalls this to him:  
 "I have a tape of your voice when it was high  
 and sweet.  
 I had to believe you.  
 Even you sang of change,  
 and still and all you sing of change,  
 one more thing I rely on,  
 like the body-count nicks that beg to fret your guitar,  
 looking for a place to be home."  
 jayjadedunafraid,  
 he'll be a perfect L.A. man someday  
 and if the perfect lady at his side  
 must move for a bassist with a Malibu beard  
 so much the more to shock the masses  
 cheering as Jeremy whispers  
 "the sixties are over" in his ear  
 and moves himself to play a game with buzzers  
 and bells.  
 Jeremy learns from everything, learning  
 everything but the difference between sound  
 and noise.  
 He falls in the forest daily  
 one of an arbor of tall mongrels  
 with the potency of legends and the certainty  
 of doubt,  
 finally rising (at long last) to learn a trade.  
 It seems such a waste,  
 filled notebooks that are already art  
 in unopened state  
 lying in states  
 of self-disrespect  
 it seems such a waste . . .  
 creating words that as parts of larger words  
 already sound more pleasing than what we hear  
 but we never hear  
 it seems such a terrible waste . . .  
 The Chinese know no words of English they  
 could use  
 or need, expressing their games in dances,  
 playing joyed releasing of the week by day



screamly jumping wisdom at the passion play  
 happy agony in one way—  
 every game's in its place, well used but still ready  
 when these players move away  
 having served as a model for the cocked-eye kid,  
 ten-year-old G.I. Jobriath  
 cracked marionette  
 conceals his begs, just  
 waiting for surprise.  
 Again the game is stunned by a death blow,  
 standing surely justified  
 the kid too old for six million dollars  
 a little too young for a dime.  
 Here is his real model: Werewolf Billy  
 hand clap for the mouthed chant—  
 his drive would make your mother cry  
 but her son couldn't do as well.  
 Billy's celebrated on Wild Life daily  
 mind over matter and head over heels  
 hypnotizing All-American pop corn  
 I think when stoned he wrote this passion play  
 Ken sees him in a dream taller than anything,  
 squinting  
 beckoning physically to call to you, anyone  
 transmitting small sparks which everyone condusive  
 join  
 then horror, horror . . .  
 for Billy leaves his honey in a jar on Inner City  
 next to a cracked medallion of the yin and yang  
 honey to smooth the throat with which he next goes  
 out to sully  
 the smile of all the elements of Allison.  
 Ken's hands are pinned and dimmed

girls sitting lap in lap  
 throwing out their swinging legs  
 as on goes on deliberately  
 while Ken finds that he must force himself  
     to raise a thought in protest  
 heaving up harder actions than his will could  
     command, breaking  
 fury through responses now keyed in stead to  
     eruption  
 turning desperately rendering dizzy himself he finds  
 sight sighed Allison to his eyes.  
 Not a dream now,  
 for she laughs not cries, and her eyes well.  
 Momentarily Ken is confused.  
 Believing in the dream, he reaches to her,  
 saying "I have never seen the sky so ready to rain  
 without actually raining."  
 Phrase unachieved, never begun,  
 for she, not seeing the Pisces boy,  
 speaks—his story, maybe to laugh a bit  
 but he prides tears to hear  
 her words:  
 "I cried a vulgar, pretty sound  
 and when I'd stopped there was this  
 boy child, love innocent, unhearing, soon curious,  
 finally frightened.  
 I hid an unbroken wrist to him  
 flesh colored bandaid joke  
 revealed white skin to him . . .  
 'Too much light,' he said, 'too soft, you are  
 too ingenious for a vocal child who  
 whispers basso boffo  
 cries to sing then only reads in mime.'  
 I was confused everywhere,  
 staggered of this, hurt around, caught  
 collapsing on  
 a bed of knives, poised; then  
 saddened, stifled, remained  
 to just names.  
 Then was Gil a vision, clung to,  
 stronger than elements, though  
 shy, certain  
 a Canaan . . .  
 I gasped as he  
 fought played to surrender, finally  
 removed my bandage and shocking stopped  
 real bloodied kiss.  
 I was stung to varicolored cries—  
 my pure blonde hair, red gin,  
 glasses held in sealed wrists, mine white,  
 his darker, sweat covered,  
 known to work till sweet play.  
 Play for me expansive shy  
 rock chipped fragment lore  
 the Ouija board speaks in anagrams  
 and you are shy no more.  
 Yes I am a parallel, a scapegoat, a paradox,  
 sixteen and twenty-four . . .  
 I give everything to Gil

and will, freely needing him,  
 amazed sometimes, startled and scared  
 then delighted . . .  
 delighted . . .  
 but strange I don't forget the birthday of that  
     Pisces boy  
 because he seemed to save me once and I can't  
     ignore that."  
 Allison cannot be what Ken wants  
 savior for himself  
 she needs as much her Gil  
 as all other known needs.  
 But Ken she does not ignore, as she says,  
 and turning to him,  
 exudes that much of smile  
 that he can need:  
 "Love," she says  
 "to see you  
 again" her  
 words rivet ripple shivers, touch perhaps, secreted  
     around  
     the flailing jealous Gil, her  
     clear love, whom  
     jealous she needs and now so jealous becomes,  
     as even  
 the eunuch genius comes to admit—  
 she deigns to touch the boy  
 who will now do any thing  
 for another, she says  
 "Go, I'd love that, buy me coffee,  
 and if you'd like to, taste it, I'll notice but it won't  
     show."  
 Out in the cold, coatless  
 why has Ken played the martyr?  
 For the boy's mannish actions  
 from the eunuch's warm desire.  
 Eunuch sounds right but it's just an extreme word  
 describing conditions that aren't secured  
 at times the mind lags and forgets itself  
 not forever inert.  
 Out in the cold, again  
 because the grownups are talking  
 (a bitter and hurt supposition  
 that's almost right)  
 desire too little to warm him  
 mostly sent anyway away  
 cold insufficient to numb the skin to cadence  
 finally it's the truth that nobody dies.  
 Maybe to wander the lands of Greece  
 with your father on your back  
 to force experience on  
 barely pliant skin  
 as there stands in tradition coat  
 the strength of scientist Jon  
 whose own father's left legacy  
 sleeps used well.  
 Greece was never as it is  
 as the mind's home of vagrant Jon  
 a forgotten friend whose limits lie

*in nonexistent planets:  
 dreamer of the not impossible  
 fatherless but strongly fathered  
 strong in his own devices  
 yet stifled furious at self-lost love:  
 "Not that Kathy could not have me  
 but that she could marry into the sandbox  
 of the overdeveloped child  
 who coughs her an offer of rabid lust.  
 He beckons her now to the washing machine  
 and opening the door, she joins him inside.  
 Grinning lecherously he  
 tells her, 'This is outer space.'  
 Space . . . that he dare use that word.  
 It is my life, a world of  
 limitless certainties . . .  
 what chance . . ."*  
*And on, not all right, or all knowing,  
 unsure of his limits; less sure,  
 in truth ignorant, of the fact  
 that he cannot win any all.  
 Yet seeking agape, seeking agape  
 in terms of courting to fall  
 Jon completes a turn, having seen all sides he can  
 of the cave  
 he faces an old direction, then looks and squinting  
 finds the Skylark's ivy, emotion large to her eyes.  
 The Skylark's ivy/Jessica seems to some to wonder  
 with doe eyes that rather smile  
 but emotions are all the same  
 and all are good for her.  
 Jon sees the feelings he needs in her:  
 sadness, a hurt from home,  
 which does in fact rest in the corner  
 of her large and brightpetaling eyes.  
 She excuses herself from her friend Gina  
 who notes the loss particularly,  
 expecting the downbeat to happen  
 then letting in only so much.  
 Sullen but well Gina takes her troubles—  
 it seems the heat does not flush her, but rather  
 leaves her cool  
 though one could get close enough to see her cough  
 and shiver her friends in the heat.  
 So Jon speaks so fast to Jessica  
 who sees no reason not to accept.  
 This goes on for a time, and welcomed  
 but confusing to wondering Phil:  
 That Jon is somehow all the king's men  
 seems to amaze Phil,  
 now out on his own, curious but doubtful;  
 Phil's quaint advance draw Gina into the old circle  
 where Dan and Lance are wont to follow . . .  
 What Phil cannot understand  
 is that Jon only wants to save  
 concern shows, and soothes, at least for a while.  
 The third of the girls is Eve, largely ignored  
 but magical, maybe  
 she says she talks to whales*

*and no doubt they reply.  
 Time is lost on her, sweetly  
 for time hurts her anyway  
 she is a false Fate, an excellent seamstress,  
 weaving the thankfully uncut string.  
 But the Pisces boy cannot yet feel the soothing of  
 the frayed end  
 the cloth that Eve will later say looked so good  
 for out he is to buy the coffee that burns his pleased  
 hands  
 all he can do at this time but likely it is well.*



*Back in the room, accomplished  
 Ken effects his surprise  
 and Allison is amused that he could do it.  
 Flushed weary, selves amazed  
 she and Gil have been  
 and will have more than all time  
 to be so again.  
 But now she wants to tease  
 and taking laughed encouragement from the cup  
 she reaches a hand  
 again around her Gil,  
 she strokes the Pisces boy's amazing sideburn,  
 smiles as he reacts. All might she do  
 and deftly it is well.  
 Craft and affection bear her soft/excoriating  
 gesture, part kindness, part ego, part  
 kindness, part  
 kindness . . .*



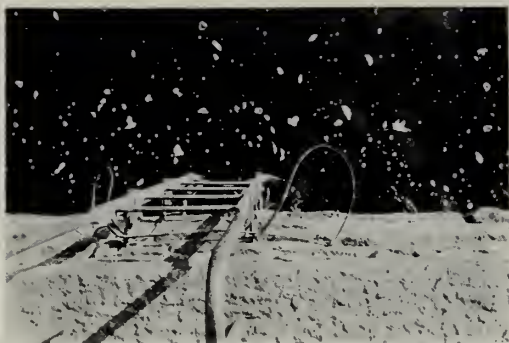
*And the genius of the boy/boy of genius  
 smiles,  
 crumbled distinction  
 that his mind is no longer here immured. The smile  
 of Allison regards a mistletoe  
 and kisses four times rapidamazing Ken  
 unstrung, unparalleled,  
 fit now to parallel  
 and well it is.  
 But longly the lag has been, and time has not been  
 such  
 that it has worn away  
 and metaphysics calls for days in balance:  
 the reasons for doubt are gone but Ken, himself  
 now, losing slowly  
 longer doubts.  
 Pass the many  
 including the false Fate Eve, weaving  
 a small furry puppet of Ken.  
 This is the procession to which  
 Ken must summon to scream:  
 "I long my heartbeat to move with your  
 chance gestures, unconsidered,  
 never to fear motion as a new thing,  
 to be moved of you—"  
 The gone procession,  
 and Eve touches of silence  
 and trust say, "I will stay."*

*This is a night for no words  
 except the most definite needed  
 so that Gil can bliss in hours  
 confessing love in tongues to Allison.  
 Eve says nothing, wistful,  
 patient with the last remnants of the boy  
 and at its last she leads herself and Ken to follow.  
 The Wall is clear glass,  
 rendered by itself meaningless/useless.  
 illegible, streak smudged  
 and conducive to nothing.  
 Words have seen dying  
 and dancefloors, semantics  
 upon them everything unreal:  
 now music is left, and chiming  
 for midnight on newyears eve.*

*Then for Ken an Eve remembered on  
 a beach said to be evocative  
 an Eve hard to remember  
 as hard to prove true  
 "Only that ther are no words,"  
 Ken says, "to join the evidence  
 that the clock on the Wall had stopped  
 and wanted light to start."  
 Common ways talk of beaches  
 reclaiming emotions  
 but why should the White Rocks hold the dark  
 the room could not contain?  
 Darting cold through the furlined Coat*



*reminds Ken of his warmth  
 he is not moved to the beach  
 yet he is moved of it.  
 "I believe," he says, "I am  
 enormously free of tears,"  
 starting then to wonder if the cold  
 has frozen them from his eyes.  
 Those who saw his leaving kiss  
 the night before with Eve  
 wonder at his remorse  
 and blinking eyes.  
 Drawing up the collar, he feels  
 the white fur at his neck  
 and doffs the coat  
 whose help he falsely trusted.  
 The cold he dreams to have  
 ragged token of the hostess on  
 newyears  
 Eve  
 the hostess he was borne on  
 gurgled sound on  
 live on  
 brightly  
 the hostess he has teared on  
 nightly on  
 telephone  
 laid on  
 slightly on  
 and never  
 again.*



But he is safe, still  
lost,  
the wanderer in the sad joke  
that Jeremy tells so well  
the wanderer who looks for  
a way out, and a way in,  
and a way to choose from both,  
beaching his seared words in rapidsighing silence.  
"Eve i am sorry  
if i've embarrassed you  
too much for your family  
too little for your friends  
Eve i am  
prisons of medias res  
tormented  
greatly  
and never  
again."  
"You are not  
tormented" Eve says  
"You are  
enough for me,  
sighing me close  
you can think all you want  
to feared conclusions  
talk all you want  
forget the light,  
what you're sure may be right  
doesn't hurt me  
all that matters is what you do  
forget the light,  
though old wives tales are usually right  
and if you need applause here's the touch of  
a hand for you."

\* \* \*

poems written and thrown away  
poems never known to write  
poems that will not be  
—things happen, unattempted  
done to prevent the future  
though the future sometimes takes from the past  
and makes it fine  
—things aim to resolution  
and amazed they resolve  
(having stopped the timing element)

for the winners of the night:  
now Ken and Eve smooth to tear on inside  
Jon and Jessica find solid hope in scribbled Utopias  
and Gil, run in new snow, gasps that  
his head remains high and his heels dry,  
taken to Allison as a compliment.

Lot of mostly saving,  
but it is good when saving  
to remember the others are not to be dispossessed  
it just seems that way.

Passed all beyond him  
left Phil to wonder this:  
"GOD MADE RIVERS  
GOD MADE LAKES  
GOD MADE LOVE  
WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES"

Am I a son of God?  
You think Jesus never smiled a woman . . .  
Am I?"

Not even Ken can see  
that Phil's fear is wholly sincere  
that Phil's words are a prism, whose showing side  
sends light and cold skittering away.

To move would be to see  
and could have been for Gina  
who found an unseen solace  
on newyears eve while Phil sat  
drinking, sneezed so forced to close his eyes.  
Time since and for her a constant independence day,  
for she knows herself and all things and knows more  
that her weaknesses are not hers by right,  
feels no guilt, perhaps anger in taking the only  
needed refuge.

When forced she is to hide she kneels erect  
uncowering near the tall wings  
of Dan or Lance,

sure in their wants, never begs  
unhurt, hardly romantic,  
more prosaic than faltering.  
The few times Phil has touched her she laughed,  
slight

no doubt of his wicked motives,  
of his simple affection.  
So once in a while she casts her downed eyes under  
tint glass streaked from  
dry abuse

and takes for cure an occasional vended kiss, while  
Phil looks on.

She has no doubt reasons  
perhaps surely, explanations,  
and credence is not due to  
the worst that is thought of her,  
oversimplification; and it does not matter anyway  
when the squire sighs  
for he sighs always in the same way:  
"I am found chanceless," Phil says,  
"though nothing is wrong with me  
holy untouched  
though I want all I want

... it's uncertain though what that is.  
 But why must Ken forever torture me  
 by pinching himself verbally,  
 asking in his pulse's constant prayer  
 what he's done?  
 I listen to Ken and he speaks of hurt  
 of kisses with split lips, and listen  
 to Gil, surely the lover,  
 remained ruthless rest to me.  
 And I find it increasing hard  
 to listen to Jon, the Strongman certainly,  
 who laughs at my face behind my back to  
 winded/accepting Ken.  
 Jon says nothing exists behind his back  
 (the stare of Jessica searing the edge of his weak eye)  
 then on a laughing jag he talks of Plato's cave.  
 The Strongman can go on forever  
 anything he does  
 playing the whole hand  
 while I only kiss a finger  
 and, going on forever, he stops

(thinking his motion can stop),  
 questions his great passion  
 and decides that it is love.  
 It is not, I know, but I do not care:  
 it's something I think's worthwhile,  
 So many good together  
 why should I complain?  
 Ken the wounded soldier  
 charred words in rapidsilent echo;  
 Jon the Strongman leader  
 godless in Jessica's heaven  
 —and Jeremy laughs but I don't understand  
 when they talk about Travel Time."  
 There has never been a poem. Now each  
 in turn enters the room, noticing  
 more than anything that the room is empty  
 in their eyes.  
 Left Jeremy takes a tiny pebble  
 blurs his eyes to the rest, carefully  
 writes a name on the walleyed stone  
 and casts it like a play to the sea.

---

*I sit in the grey quivering trolley  
 (the dust clings to the floor  
 only rising  
 when the trolley exhales  
 when the feet scuff)  
 I sit  
 crunching icecubes  
 considering their texture with my tongue  
 and then  
 cutting them like diamonds with my teeth  
 collecting pools of water on my eyeglasses  
 distorting my vision  
 on a grey quivering trolley*

Joe Fiore

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## (CHILD OF THE UNIVERSE) by Rod Feste

PEACE, HIS TRADEMARK. Two fingers in a Vee. That's it. Where's he going. Why doesn't anybody know him? Like the Fool on the Hill. He'll give you a courteous "Thank You" or . . . Rocket man Space man quiet man noisy boy. Sees empty sky, where are the wings. All a vision in his mind. Ride with the brown dirt cowboy

He can't be all there, he's playing with a full deck. Climbing into his newspaper taxi. He's not a dreamer. Realistic Idealism. As you turn the volume down he gets smaller. every body listens, no body listens, he don't care he doesn't. Upstairs, downstairs lateral Arabesquerie. See how he flies can't get away. High velocity/decilite convenience. Digital dynamics, delinquent depilator. (higher ground?)

Come down they said, Come up he said. Come up he begged Hac oratione habita, postquam extremum palum igne calefecit, oculum Polyphemi, dum dormit, ardenti ligno transfodit . . .

peace, his trademark. Two fingers in a Vee.

Mike Coffey



*Green Meadow values  
 Shroud the simple poetic "truth"  
 Naïveté rots as the silent  
 breaking of the distant hosts and  
 vending hearts leaves arid souls  
 steaming in a callous pot of cymballic  
 Agony.  
 But, stretch and cry and . . .  
 and bear the pulpless  
 fruit of inaudible gold.  
 And the glimmering gasps  
 from your suspended, plastic, tinny gods,  
 and your love for stilted patent-leather majesty  
 will hang me nonetheless  
 mingled in copious hatred,  
 Expelled longingly, looking,  
 Ended  
 Engaged in "just friends" morality.  
 Please, pass the carrion.  
 Or do I butter my crown alone.*

Manny Noe

## burning to be gone

2/75

*i always did (and continue  
 to) think of myself as a cancer on  
 the holy possibility of clear nothingness,  
 rotting and going on & on & on.  
 there is no sanctuary in  
 the face of the void; and  
 i prefer to believe in nothing rather than  
 everything, and no one rather than  
 everyone (the race of drunken bullies  
 and reluctant sluts: man). i am an  
 unlovable cold cynic, but merely  
 keeping alive isn't worth the trouble.*



wls

Lino Tontodonato

*Compliments of*

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